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Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

Provisional

6724th meeting

Tuesday, 28 February 2012, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Menan	(Togo)
Members:	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	China	Mr. Yang Tao
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	India	Mr. Kumar
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zhukov
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Security Council mission

Briefing by Security Council mission to Haiti (13 to 16 February 2012)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council mission

Briefing by Security Council mission to Haiti (13 to 16 February 2012)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Haiti to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I would like to welcome the return of the members of the Council and the Secretariat who took part in the Security Council mission to Haiti. At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by Her Excellency Ms. Susan Rice, Head of the Security Council mission to Haiti and Permanent Representative of the United States.

I now give the floor to Ms. Rice, who led the Security Council mission to Haiti.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): Let me begin this report on the Security Council's trip to Haiti by thanking Mr. Mariano Fernandez Amunategui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, the team of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the Government of Haiti for welcoming us and for facilitating our visit.

The trip — the Security Council's first to the country in three years — was undertaken to examine the security situation, to review post-quake reconstruction efforts and to assess the consolidation of democracy. We saw first hand Haiti's important progress since the tragic earthquake of January 2010. We also saw a disturbing level of political infighting in a country that can ill afford it. Throughout our trip, we reiterated the international community's solidarity with Haitians as they tackle those challenges.

In Port-au-Prince, we heard President Martelly and then Prime Minister Conille outline their respective visions, including for promoting development by attracting foreign investment and creating jobs. We gained some insights into the Government's ideas for rebuilding Haiti's devastated infrastructure and for strengthening its health care. Our interlocutors underscored that development efforts are a critical part of ensuring Haiti's long-term stability.

President Martelly told us that he wanted to create a second security force with responsibilities that could include border security, environmental protection and disaster response. Council members questioned that course of action and emphasized instead the importance of completing the reform and strengthening of the Haitian National Police (HNP) so that it can assume full responsibility for the country's security.

Members of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies shared with us very frank, and sometimes critical, views on the slow progress of international support, alleged sexual abuse by MINUSTAH personnel, cholera and what the legislative saw as the failings of Haiti's executive branch.

On the first full day, MINUSTAH officials briefed us on the plans under way to reduce the Mission's military component, in accordance with resolution 2012 (2011), and to put greater responsibility on United Nations Police and their Haitian counterparts. Later, we travelled to Miragoâne, from which MINUSTAH had already withdrawn its military forces. There, we saw a demonstration of how a MINUSTAH police unit from Bangladesh was supporting the Haitian National Police in crowd control and other security operations.

From Miragoâne, the Council travelled to Léogâne — the epicentre of the 2010 earthquake. We met the leaders of a Korean company of MINUSTAH engineers, whose work included rebuilding roads and other infrastructure necessary to MINUSTAH's operations and the installation of solar-powered lights in a nearby displaced persons camp to help increase security. We also visited the site of a non-governmental organization-led project that was constructing houses for people who had lost theirs in the earthquake. The MINUSTAH engineers were working there to strengthen the local capacity by training Haitians in construction and basic engineering.

We met representatives of the Haitian private sector and civil society, as well as members of the diplomatic corps, at a reception at the end of our first full day. We heard a range of views regarding the challenges that face Haiti and the role of the international community in supporting the country.

On our second full day, the Council travelled to Cap-Haïtien in the north to examine how rule of law institutions function at the local level. We visited a typical severely overcrowded prison and a judicial tribunal plainly unable to cope with the demands that it faces. Those visits were stark reminders of the enormous challenges in strengthening the judicial system in Haiti.

We toured Caracol, also in the north, where Haitians and international partners are starting to construct the first major industrial development since the earthquake — the Caracol Industrial Park. The project is set to open later this year and Sae-A Trading Company, a leading Korean garment manufacturer, has already committed to investing in an operation there. Once fully operational, the Park could create up to 60,000 new jobs when it is completed.

On returning to Port-au-Prince, we visited the Delmas 33 police station, where we saw how the simple act of co-locating United Nations and Haitian police can enable mentoring, training and the transfer of key skills.

We began our final day with a visit to the Haitian National Police Academy in Port-au-Prince, where we were briefed on efforts to increase the number of HNP personnel, to bring more women into the force, to investigate officers accused of corruption or human rights violations, and to build skills for combating drug trafficking and sexual and gender-based violence. In the Carradeux internally displaced persons camp, Council members visited tent homes and witnessed the difficult conditions that face Haitians still living in camps, that is, nearly half a million people. United Nations Police and camp leaders briefed us on efforts to protect women and other vulnerable groups from sexual and other violence.

We also visited one of only two cholera treatment centres in the capital, where Haitians and international partners are working to slow the spread of the disease and to treat those stricken by it. Over lunch, we met with members of women's organizations, religious groups and non-governmental organizations and youth and other civil society leaders. They shared with us the deep desire of Haitians to see their country stand on its own and rely less on international support.

Many Haitians shared with us serious concerns about the bitter disputes that divide Haiti's political leaders, both within and between the executive and legislative branches of the Government. Ordinary Haitians told us that they want their elected leaders to put aside winner-take-all politics and to work together in a spirit of compromise to solve the nation's problems. Moving forward with elections for local officials and one third of the Senate is a critical part of that process.

The Council saw that Haiti's enormous challenges require the coordinated efforts of all stakeholders, most important, the Haitian Government and civil society, but also the civilian and military elements of MINUSTAH, other parts of the United Nations system, donor Governments and local and international NGOs. Such efforts are critical to realizing the Government's goals of attracting investment and creating jobs. The trip gave us the opportunity to see the dedicated work that the men and women of MINUSTAH perform under very difficult conditions.

Many Haitians acknowledged that MINUSTAH plays a necessary role in maintaining security and stability. However, they also shared a desire to see the Mission eventually leave, with strengthened Haitian institutions taking on its responsibilities. The cholera epidemic and allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by some Mission personnel have badly eroded support for MINUSTAH and undermined its work. We are deeply troubled by these allegations, and expect the United Nations to redouble its efforts to prevent any further incidents of this kind and to ensure that those responsible are held accountable.

Haitians and the United Nations Mission have endured much together and accomplished much in the two years since the earthquake. With continued dedication and hard work, they can yet build a better future for Haiti.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Rice for her briefing.

On behalf of the Council, I should like to express appreciation to all of the members of the Security Council and the Secretariat who participated in the mission for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibilities on behalf of the Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.